DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 435 786 UD 033 192

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TITLE Early Interventions for At-Risk Students.
PUB DATE 1998-00-00
NOTE 90p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Community Involvement; *Early Intervention; *Elementary School Teachers; Enrichment Activities; Ethnography; *High Risk Students; Intergenerational Programs; Music Education; Primary Education; Program Development; Reading Programs; *Socioeconomic Status; Student Behavior; Summer Programs

ABSTRACT

This is a report on a school-wide ethnographic study of intervention strategies for at-risk students in kindergarten through second grade. A group of 5 teachers from an elementary school of approximately 250 students in a Midwest community of about 18,000 people (2 first-grade teachers, 2 second-grade teachers, and 1 music teacher) comprised the research team for this study. Data collection procedures included interviews, observations, and survey results. Participant groups included faculty, staff members, students, and parents. The constant comparative method used in data analysis forced the researchers to focus primarily on the interventions. Of the 34% of the students of low socioeconomic status, 72% of the first and second graders were seen by their teachers as "at-risk," while only 18% of those of low socioeconomic status were seen as not at risk. Based on the information gained through this study, interventions were identified to address the needs of at-risk students. These included: (1) an intergenerational reading program; (2) the integration of vocal music into the curriculum; (3) the addition of instrumental music to some curriculum units; (4) a reading program that enlisted men; (5) a summer enrichment program; (6) community linking programs; (7) an intensive spelling program; and (8) behavior management approaches. Five appendixes contain data sources, figures, the Institutional Review Board documentation, a parent survey, and an annotated bibliography. (Contains 1 table, 10 figures, and 16 references.) (Author/SLD)

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Running head: EARLY INTERVENTIONS FOR AT-RISK STUDENTS

Early Interventions for At-Risk Students

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Abstract

This is a school-wide ethnographic study of intervention strategies for at-risk students in kindergarten through second grade. A group of five teachers from an elementary school in a Midwest community comprised the research team for this study. Data collection procedures included interviews, observations, and survey results. Participant groups included faculty, staff members, students, and parents. The constant comparative method used in data analysis guided us to focus primarily on interventions. Based on the information gained through this study, interventions were identified to address the needs of at-risk students.

Introduction

Jeb enters the class on Thursday morning, too late for lunch count for the third time this week. Six tardies and eight absences have already been recorded in the quarter. The school-supplied backpack does not arrive with him. As the class begins the morning math lesson, Jeb's head is resting on his desk. He appears to be tired and unmotivated. "My stomach hurts," is his comment as he is asked to find his materials. When encouraged to participate in the class math activity, a common response is, "I can't do that stuff."

For those of us who work with young children, it does not take long to recognize the factors that can determine whether a child is ready to learn.

Objective

A goal of educational research is the improvement of practice. Our research team has sought to identify the factors which contribute to a lack of success for students in the classroom.

For the purpose of this study, success is defined as (a) performing academically at grade level; (b) being able to function within the social structure of the classroom; and (c) having parents/guardians who are involved in the child's school life.

Ninety-three years of combined teaching experience at the early elementary level have enabled this team of five teachers-as-researchers to recognize the increasing numbers of young children in our classes who exhibit academic and/or social risk factors. It was our objective for this ethnographic study to examine risk

factors affecting the K-2 students at Hubert School (like all names in this study, coded for confidentiality) and to explore meaningful academic and social interventions for this population.

In this study, interventions are defined as purposeful strategies to alter the patterns of social and academic concerns for children with identified risk factors.

Background Information

The researchers for this ethnographic study included two first grade teachers, two second grade teachers, and one music teacher for grades one through four. Hubert Elementary is a school of approximately 250 students in grades K-4. Hubert school is one of seven elementary attendance centers in a Midwestern community of approximately 18,000 people. The population of Hubert Elementary includes 88% European American heritage, 8% Hispanic-American and Hispanic heritage, 3% African-American heritage, and 1% American Indian and Asian or Asian-American heritage students.

As colleagues of Hubert Elementary, the five teachers on the research team have shared a concern for equalizing the opportunities of all students. The focus on at-risk students was seen by this team as an issue which needed to be addressed in our school district, particularly at the early elementary grade levels we teach. As Greenberg, Coleman, and Rankin (1993) stated:

> . . . intervention at the pre-school and early elementary level is more likely to have an effect on life-long learning than programs which begin later in a

child's school life. . . . In today's world, we need to nurture the gifts and talents of all children; our society cannot afford to neglect the needs of those at-risk. (pp. 91, 95)

A limited amount of information was found relative to studies at the early elementary level. According to Rush and Vitale (1994), "The majority of empirical studies to identify at-risk students have been conducted at the high school level. Of the approximate 1,000 studies. . . only 2.9% could be classified as empirical studies that investigated at-risk elementary school factors (p. 326).

Limitations of the Research

It was not the intent of this research team to focus on low socioeconomic status as an identifying characteristic of "at-risk." However, during the course of this study, correlational findings were apparent for low socioeconomic levels and students with other risk factors. For the purpose of this study, the research team identified risk factors as including the following characteristics:

*poor academic performance (below grade level)

*low self-esteem (determined by teacher observation)

*lack of home support

*inconsistent attendance

*lack of motivation

*short attention span (inadequate for age-appropriate activities)

*developmental delays

*inappropriate social skills (determined by school standard behavior code)

This research was completed as part of a site-based Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction at the Wichita State University. The two-year time frame of the program and limited funding support created further limitations.

Review of Literature

Our review of professional literature related to "at-risk" students has included (a) historical perspective, as well as (b) recent ethnographic findings, and (c) research data from a number of investigative authors. Database searches included ERIC, EBSCOhost, PSYCHlit, and a number of Internet sources. Studies from 1990-present were reviewed.

History of the Concept "At-Risk"

The term "at-risk" originated in the field of epidemiology. Medicine and insurance have used the term to refer to probability of determinant factors. The field of education has adopted this term from the medical and insurance professions, carrying with it the implication that treatment or prevention of some kind is needed (Southwest Education Development Laboratory, 1997).

Common Themes

In reviewing professional literature, some common findings were apparent. McLaughlin and Vacha (1992) describe at-risk characteristics as including low basic skills performance and below grade level achievement. Rush and Vitale (1994) identified these characteristics: health factors, low or inconsistent attendance, motivation, behavior problems, retention, family economic factors, language development, abusive families, poor coping skills, and family background factors. Hepburn and White (1990) defined at-risk: "The term at risk is . . . particularly applied to young people whose prospects for becoming productive members of

society look dim" (as cited in Southwest Education Development Laboratory, 1997, p. 5).

Some of the studies we reviewed have identified at-risk students as a subculture due to educational labeling, relationships with peers, and feelings of alienation (Kagan, 1990). Amelioration might focus on inclusion of at-risk students, positive relationships, and increased family involvement in schools. One-on-one assistance, lower class size in grades K-3, cooperative rather than competitive academic tasks, increased integration of music into all curriculum areas (Shuler, 1991), more human guidance, and positive reinforcement have all been reported as successful intervention strategies.

Wehlage and Rutter (1986) stated that over several decades of study, an astonishingly consistent perception among at-risk students is that their teachers do not care about them (as cited in Kagan, 1990, p. 106). A study by Edmonds (1986) suggested that "a school can create a coherent environment more potent than any single influence (teachers, class, family, neighborhood) . . . So potent that for at least six hours a day it can override almost everything else in the lives of children" (p. 93).

Summary

This review of literature has provided general insights about how at-risk students are defined and perceived. The studies of young at-risk students reviewed indicated that early intervention has greater long-term effect than intervention at

higher grade levels. School environment and caring relationships with teachers also have a significant influence for at-risk students.

Methodology

The research team for this study was comprised of five teachers. These included two first grade classroom teachers, two second grade classroom teachers, and one first through fourth grade music teacher. As "emerging paradigm" theorists, we were the primary interviewers, gathering and analyzing data to identify risk factors in young children and to explore positive intervention strategies.

Researchers

Researcher One brings to this study nearly 30 years of experience teaching young children. Grades taught include kindergarten, first, second, fourth, and sixth. Twenty-five years have been spent in first grade classsrooms. She believes strongly in educational opportunities for all children, regardless of background or risk factors. She is currently teaching first grade together with Researcher Three. Instruction in these conjoined classrooms often combines the resources of both teachers.

Researcher Two has been teaching K-12 vocal music for 11 years. Currently, she is teaching first through fourth grade music at Hubert Elementary School. Her philosophy is that all students can learn and that it is her responsibility to find the best method to allow students to create and learn to their fullest potential.

Researcher Three began her career as an elementary physical education teacher in grades first through sixth for three years. She also was a reading tutor in small group situations. Further education prepared her for teaching first grade at

Hubert Elementary where she has remained for the past 15 years. She is a part of a team with Researcher One. Her educational philosophy is child-centered, believing that all children can learn and that caring relationships are vital.

Researcher Four brings 19 years of classroom experience at second, fourth, and fifth grade levels. Her belief is that all children can learn. She has job-shared at Hubert School in second grade for the past 17 years with five different instructors.

Researcher Five has had 15 years of classroom experience, teaching second through seventh grades. She currently teaches second grade at Hubert Elementary. Her personal philosophy of education is that all children can learn in their own time and in their own way.

Site

The site of this study was an elementary school of approximately 250 kindergarten through fourth grade students. Hubert Elementary included nine full-time teachers, one job-sharing team of two teachers, and nine part-time certified instructional staff members. Hubert Elementary has a staff of 12 classified personnel (secretaries, aides, paraprofessionals) who support the educational program.

Procedure

Our research proposal was presented to the Institutional Review Board of Wichita State University in Spring, 1997. An amendment was filed in Summer, 1997 to increase the participant group to include students and parents. Interview questions were submitted for review as a part of the original proposal.

Interview face sheets and research journals have been kept by each

teacher/researcher as a part of the audit trail. The time span for this study was from Spring 1997 through Spring 1998.

Participants

The purposive sampling used in this study initially included interviewing all faculty and staff of Hubert Elementary. Data gathered from parents, students, and community persons brought added perspective to the study. Table 1, Data Sources, details complete information concerning participants (see Appendix A).

Data Collection Procedures

Interviews were conducted by the five team members who became the human data gathering instruments for this study. All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim for data analysis. Names were coded for confidentiality. Interview information from participants was unitized and categorized using the constant comparative method of analysis as detailed by Maykut and Morehouse (1994). For the purpose of documentation, items from the interviews have been coded. A citation read as [V-int.KB.27-29] translates to: Vierthaler (researcher), interview, participant's code initials, transcription line numbers.

Insert Table 2 Data Codes

Table 2

Data Codes

Type of Data	Code
Interviews of key informants	
1. Huxman interviews SB	H-int.SB.
2. Huxman interviews AA	H-int.AA.
3. Huxman interviews SC	H-int.SC.
4. Huxman interviews BE	H-int.BE.
5. Huxman interviews SA	H-int.SA.
5. Huxman interviews DA	H-int.DA.
6. Huxman interviews SN	H-int.SN.
7. Huxman interviews NS	H-int.NS.
8. Huxman interviews SJ	H-int.SJ.
9. Huxman interviews SM	H-int.SM.
10. Koontz interviews NA	K-int.NA.
11. Koontz interviews BB	K-int.BB.
12. Koontz interviews KT	K-int.KT.
13. Koontz interviews NC	K-int.NC.
14. Koontz interviews SJ	K-int.SJ.
15. Koontz interviews LH	K-int.LH.
16. Koontz interviews CK	K-int.CK.
17. Koontz interviews FT	K-int.FT.
18. Koontz interviews HC	K-int.HC.
19. Nottingham interviews SJ	N-int.SJ.
20. Nottingham interviews HM	N-int.HM.
21. Nottingham interviews ES	N-int.ES.
22. Klassen interviews WJ	KL-intWJ.
23. Klassen interviews TS	KL-intTS.
24. Klassen interviews RB	KL-intRB.
25. Klassen interviews DB	KL-intDB
26. Klassen interviews TS	V-intTS
27. Vierthaler interviews BK	V-intBK
28. Vierthaler interviews SC	V-intSC
29 Vierthaler interviews GK	V-intGK
Journals	
Frankie Huxman's journal, date	fh.jnl(date follows code)
Barb Koontz's journal, date	bk.jnl(date follows code)

To further identify participants, transcripts were unitized using white cards for school personnel interviewed, yellow cards for parent interviews, and blue cards for student interviews. Each interview was copied on a different color of paper to denote each individual interviewee.

After interview data were unitized, rules of inclusion were written as unit cards were categorized. This provided valuable information from participants which became an integral part of the data used in determining intervention strategies.

Classroom observations were recorded by each researcher to further provide data for the study. Notes were kept in personal research journals to document observations and to substantiate information on effective intervention strategies.

A survey evolved from data to obtain information from parents concerning their child's early experiences (see Appendix D). Information from the survey was used as triangulation with interview data, the review of literature, observations, and the professional classroom experience of the researchers.

Results

Qualitative Data Results

Several dominant themes emerged as we created rules of inclusion to categorize our unitized data from the interviews. Many participants noted that one-on-one instruction is vital for student success. While one-on-one instruction was ideal for any student, we found it was crucial for students who were considered to be at-risk. Interview comments support this: "Many of those kids need a lot more one-on-one than any teacher can possibly give them" [V-int.1.KB.27-29]. "They often need one-on-one help because they don't understand a lot of the concepts that we work on" [K-int.1.SE.24-27].

A number of participants believed that positive interaction helped to create a stable learning environment for at-risk students. "Many at-risk children do not have a sound foundation in stability and security in their lives" [KL.int.RB. 282-285]. These students do not have the luxury of having an affirming parent or guardian. "Many of our students can be passed around from parent to parent or from guardian to guardian, and they do not have the stability to give them the security to learn" [KL.int.WJ.29-34]. It becomes the responsibility of the school to help create positive adult role models. The need for meaningful relationships with caring adults was supported in the review of professional literature. "The most significant feature common to the whole array of successful prevention programs, including school or mediation, was individual attention" (Dryfoos, 1991, p. 118).

Another important theme which emerged through our data analysis was that communication between school and home is essential to any student's success. This type of intervention is critical for students whose family characteristics put them at-risk. Even strong families felt overwhelmed about the ways in which schools solicit parent support. One highly supportive participant (parent) stated:

> But school has been almost like a foreign language to us in the sense of learning the system. And the first couple of years with all the notes coming home and things like that, it was challenging for both of us to know what to do and how things were going! [V-int.GK.16-22]

An Emergent Theme

An emergent theme, which was not anticipated, was discussed by a participant who is a senior citizen with long-term experience in working with young children. Bea has been an advocate for children, working in various capacities in libraries, pre-schools, elementary schools, and as a resource person to countless families. A surprising at-risk category which Bea described was the "tragedy of wealth." Her insightful description characterizes children who are in two-parent working families, who have strong educational backgrounds, and who are actively involved in the community. These families are on tight schedules and there is often very limited time for interaction:

> I worry about families where mealtime is almost unheard of. Families have very few meals together; there's so little time when parents and children can have an exchange of conversation. I don't know where families can pass on

> values, things that they believe in, that they want their children to have opportunities to do. . .They work so hard to find an opportunity to give these family things a chance. And I think these kids are at-risk. . .This is a new group that I didn't used to think about [H-int.SB.46-80].

A vignette that describes what we are terming "tragedy of wealth" can be found in Vignette 1.

Insert Vignette 1

Teaching Strategies

Many teaching strategies were noted as positive interventions by our participants. These included testing; adjusted curriculum; looping; and staff development in programs such as Reading Recovery, Reading Mastery, peer tutoring, and thematic instruction. Information related to Attention Deficit Disorder, medications, and learning disabilities was also helpful in developing teaching strategies.

Limitations in Implementation of Interventions

Another recognized concern was that of the limitations in implementing some key interventions. These would include strategies such as lowering the class size, increasing availability of classroom aides, increasing involvement of human

Vignette 1

fh6.1 FH-int.6 Bea
fh6.2 *This is Sunday, Oct 19, 1997. I'm visiting with Bea in her apartment, and Bea, you understand that we are*
fh6.3 *going to tape this?*
fh6.3 I understand that.
fh6.4 *Our research group for our Master's program is working on early interventions for "at-risk" students.*
fh6.5 *Could you share what the characteristics are of at risk--in your mind? What are the things that put kids at*
fh6.6 *risk?*
fh6.7 Both, OK. First comes to my mind situations that put children at-risk, and I've been impressed in the last few
fh6.8 years, with a whole new set of criteria that I never used before. Because it was easy to tell when a child was
fh6.9 hungry or ill or without a decent living situation or uncaring parent, these were things we all recognized.
fh6.10 But, either I'm becoming observant of a different type of thing or it's a different type of situation than it was in
fh6.11 former times, and so there are a couple of areas that I think of children now who are at-risk that I wouldn't
fh6.12 have thought of some time ago. One group that I think of particularly is in a group that we wouldn't have
fh6.13 thought of at all long ago: These are children that are in very active families who are professionally
fh6.14 involved or they have good educational backgrounds. Because they have a dedication to community,
fh6.15 volunteerism, that sort of thing. But it seems to me that with so many two-parent working families with
fh6.16 situations like this, very capable, well-meaning, well-educated adults are making situations in their homes
fh6.17 that are very difficult for alert, healthy children to deal with. Where schedules are so tight, and where family
fh6.18 life as we knew it long ago, where there were many opportunities every day for both parents and the children
fh6.19 to have a space of time to be who they were, not just to eat the meal or whatever the family business was at the
fh6.20 moment. But I worry about families where this is almost unheard of. Families have very few meals
fh6.21 together; there's so little time when parents and children can have an exchange of conversation. I don't know
fh6.22 where families can pass on values, things that they believe in that they want their children to have
fh6.23 opportunities to do, and these are families that are knocking themselves out in order to have enough money
fh6.24 and where-with-all to let the kids have opportunities--let the kids have lessons here,
fh6.25 involvements there, that sort of thing. And to me, I get actually frightened now that I see my children's
fh6.26 situations. Where you have two working parents, family that I know best has two professional people,
fh6.27 dedicated to their families, but also dedicated to their professional responsibilities. And, in an effort to make
fh6.28 it like it used to be, they scarcely are themselves anymore. They work so hard to find an
fh6.29 opportunity to give these family things a chance. And I think these kids are at-risk. Now these are children
fh6.30 who have all the opportunities in the world, and everybody in the family wants them to have these things and
fh6.31 set such high standards in the way of schoolwork and that sort of thing. It's just such a pace that I think some
fh6.32 of these smart, well-adjusted kids coming out of homes that you just don't think of producing kids that are at-
fh6.33 risk, but I think they just really are. That's one of the groups that concerns me most. That is a new group that
fh6.34 I didn't used to think about--we thought these were the kids with real opportunities.
fh6.35 And then there's the other side of that: the too-busy kids. I think that becomes another, can produce another
fh6.36 set of problems. Children that have lots of opportunities to do lots of extra things, and abilities to do them,
fh6.37 and parents who work so hard to, you know: swimming lessons, dancing lessons, play in the school
fh6.38 orchestra and sing in the choir, and be active in the church young people's group, and maybe 4-H or Scouts or
fh6.39 something. They're all marvelous experiences and we treasure all children getting to have experiences like
fh6.40 that, but it gets to be almost a battleground against time and energy. And it's not that only the child has so
fh6.41 many activities to be challenged by, but it causes all sorts of family friction and difficult situations in just
fh6.42 getting them where they need to be, and if you have several children and they're all active, it's almost a full-
fh6.43 time job to just get them where they need to be. And the things they need to have. And I think it puts them
fh6.44 actually at-risk. Their desires to keep up with their peers who are also doing all these things and to meet
fh6.45 their parents' expectations. If your child is going to be in Scouts, you're the kind of parent that will make
fh6.46 every kind of opportunity possible for that to earn his merit badges, and participate in the meetings, get to
fh6.47 camps, and all those things. And I think it's almost just a "tragedy of wealth" not of money, but of
fh6.48 opportunity.
fh6.49 That's an interesting term.
fh6.50 It seems to me that these are children we need to be very aware of. It's certainly a different situation than like
fh6.51 I said at first, if they're hungry or not well, or not clothed or don't have decent homes. But I think this is a
fh6.52 situation that faces modern families that we didn't used to face, and I think it's real.
fh6.53 *Oh, yes. It's real. And when you describe these kids as being at-risk, are you thinking in terms of academic,*
fh6.54 *social, or just life in general?*
fh6.55 Yes, I don't think those factors are the cause of academic failure. I don't think of that so much as I do of some
fh6.56 others, one being the child's sense of, well of course, there's keeping up with his peers, doing all the things the
fh6.57 other kids are all doing and wanting to do, and your parents want you to. And it's also a matter of
fh6.58 bewilderment of how you--it's already enough of a challenge to grow up in a very ordinary way. For
fh6.59 everybody. But especially if you have high expectations of yourself, or your parents have high expectations
fh6.60 of you. If you're going to do all these things you think, "I need to measure up to do as well as daddy wants me
fh6.61 to, and as well as I want to do. I want to make them proud of me" until if it gets to be too much, a child can
fh6.62 give up and not try anymore. Or become a person who can't manage his own feelings, his own actions in a
fh6.63 social group. I think more of that sort of thing and well, a feeling that you're not measuring up. Especially so

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fh6.64 often families in these types of situations set very high standards, not only of academics, but behavior-wise as
fh6.65 well. We want them to act mature, but we just crowd their experiences, their days of growing into maturity,
fh6.66 making things so complicated.
fh6.67 *And I know we see that the kids who used to at 4th and 5th grade start to focus on a lot of the social things,* now
fh6.68 *we're seeing that every day in first grade.*
fh6.69 Yes, I thought of that so much. For years, I taught junior highs in Sunday School. There was a whole realm of
fh6.70 problems that needed to be solved by that age group that junior highs had never encountered yet. During those
fh6.71 I think it was 11 years, I saw that level move down and down and down. Until, and now, with my own
fh6.72 grandchildren, some of these things that you were expecting your late middle schooler or high school people to
fh6.73 be wrestling with, now you have way down, much younger, oh, all the time you see it. And this puts such a
fh6.74 terrific burden on the growing child and on the family. So I don't think of them as being academically at-risk,
fh6.75 except if they face this bewilderment and failure, then I suppose they don't want to try. But I don't think of
fh6.76 that as being the first concern. I think the personal, social relationships, and then more having to assume
fh6.77 responsibility for decision-making at a much earlier age. That puts a terrific strain on a child's. . .
fh6.78 *It sure does. What are some ways that you're aware of that we're meeting needs of at-risk students?*
fh6.79 Oh, ways that institutions work?
fh6.80 *I think so, within the school, how you see that.*
fh6.81 Oh, many, many things. Looking back over my teaching many years ago, what great strides have been taken to
fh6.82 meet these. In fact, when I first started teaching, you just didn't even acknowledge these things very much.
fh6.83 And if there was a youngster who was unable to do things comparable to others, parents were either a bit
fh6.84 antagonistic or ashamed, and you didn't talk about it very much. Although that's in response to programs
fh6.85 planned. I still think there were individual teachers and professional people who recognized these
fh6.86 situations and worked very hard to help, to solve this problem for the child at-risk. But not as a community
fh6.87 or on an institutional basis.
fh6.88 *It just wasn't addressed in that same way?*
fh6.89 That's right. There was some responsibility for a "program" in quotes.
fh6.90 *And I know when in our first semester of this Master's class, we were asked to do a personal reflection, you know,*
fh6.91 *through our career. And thinking back, I pulled out my first class picture, and there was ONE, one who had*
fh6.92 *serious* needs *and concerns. That was a group of 26 kids, and now, I look down the row and if it isn't more than*
fh6.93 *half, that's unusual. So, partly it's become such a big issue for the school system because of the big numbers.*
fh6.94 Sheer numbers, yes. And I think as the world, our living becomes more complicated, more stressful, more
fh6.95 difficult. You can always look back and say, "Look at all the things we have now that families didn't have in
fh6.96 the way of resources." Even physical things. We don't work maybe as hard physically as many people did.
fh6.97 And as I think of my parents and parents of the children in my first years of teaching in a rural community,
fh6.98 terribly hard work. Physically hard working individuals.
fh6.99 *And the children had lots of responsibilities related to that?*
fh6.100 Oh, lots of responsibility. And some of them physically difficult as well as challenging for their age. So it
fh6.101 isn't that the physical aspects of it--it isn't as difficult as it was. So those families that I talked about earlier,
fh6.102 physically hard-working families did not face. Even in my growing up days in rural area, in a consolidated
fh6.103 school, we were not isolated. But there were only, you know, there were only the church, and we were active
fh6.104 in 4-H extension program in the community, our parents were involved in women's programs, but that was
fh6.105 about the extent of participation. And of course, then and now, you had those families who assume
fh6.106 responsibility for involvement in the community. Although, I don't think it was a bit harder then than it is
fh6.107 now. Maybe not as hard, because, for instance, although rural women had much hard work to do, all the
fh6.108 food preservation that is unheard of now, they still found time--I can remember when I was in junior high
fh6.109 5th or 6th grade, we still had picnics, mothers volunteered. "I'll bake the buns, you bring the wieners, and
fh6.110 drive the cars. So there was that help all along. But I don't believe there was the tension that the mother
fh6.111 volunteering in today's family has. She probably is working herself and putting the act together--it's the
fh6.112 children, there's tension every minute of the day. And when you put those situations together, it's difficult to
fh6.113 have a relaxed, happy child, anxious to do things that make it possible for him to learn.
fh6.114 *What would you say about strategies to intervene with kids, not only the ones you talked about now, but the Joes*
fh6.115 *of the world? What do you see as interventions to keep these kids successful academically and socially?*
fh6.116 That's a real challenge. I still think that probably as much as anything, the importance of an individual
fh6.117 belief in the individual child. No matter how well-planned or organized, how heavily financed, a big
fh6.118 program is often necessary--I don't want to rule any of that out--but I think you still need, EVERY child
fh6.119 needs, to feel that he belongs and is needed and respected in his own right, not as a part of a program.
fh6.120 I think of--this is a little different, maybe more a family than school situation, but the spirit is still the same.
fh6.121 Do you know that little book of Charlotte Zolotow called Say It? About a little girl and her mother who go
fh6.122 out for a walk on a beautiful fall day. It's a wonderful time, the world so beautiful and they're having such a
fh6.123 good time, they're swinging and holding hands, and the little girl says, "Say it!" And her mother says it's a
fh6.124 beautiful blue and gold day and the leaves are colored and falling. And the little girl says "Say it!" And they
fh6.125 go on and you feel this love and concern and the joy, in a way, but they meet a little dog and they feel its fur
fh6.126 and the mother says it's such a happy little dog and it feels so good. But the little girl still wants her to "Say
fh6.127 it!" Well, the last episode is when they get back to their house and from a distance, they see smoke coming out
fh6.128 of the chimney and they know the father is home and has started the fire. And they watch the smoke curl up in
fh6.129 the sky and they both think what a warm feeling it is, and the little girl says "Say it! Please say it!" and the
fh6.130 mother grabs her up and says "I love you, I love you, I love you!" And the little girl says that's what she

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fh6.131 wanted to hear. You know, the world is difficult for families to experience this sort of thing. But I think any
fh6.132 successful program, no matter how well-financed and planned it is, has to rely a great deal on the
fh6.133 sensitivities and the emotional response of the individual to carry it out! Because that's what the child feels.
fh6.134 The child doesn't feel the money that it took to run the program or the amount of planning that went in, or the
fh6.135 equipment that's needed. The child gets the result of those things through someBODY!
fh6.136 *And do you think that the kinds of relationships that a child like Joe can have with you, do you see that as filling*
fh6.137 *in some of the things that he doesn't have in his family?*
fh6.138 You hope so. I would hope so. And that says nothing against what his family is doing for him.
fh6.139 *No, I understand.*
fh6.140 It is an additional something, and it comes through the people with whom he comes in contact. It may be in a
fh6.141 very minor way, it may be a close relationship, but all of--to me, it's hard for me to see how any "program" in
fh6.142 quotes for "at-risk" children in quotes can be measured in any other way than in the personal relationships
fh6.143 that develop--I don't say "among" I say "between" the individuals who are closest to the child.
fh6.144 *I think that's absolutely so, so true. And just keeping that in mind, do you see ways that we can set that up, are*
fh6.145 *there ways that the school can influence setting up some of those kinds of things?*
fh6.146 Well, I think, to this day it looks to me like it's all kind of experimental, but any school program that provides
fh6.147 opportunity of any kind for an at-risk child to have some contact that will make him feel--know who he is and
fh6.148 know how he figures in the world scheme of things, whether it's the world of the school or the family,
fh6.149 community, or whatever--and you read about all these different things that are done and every one, I think, is
fh6.150 a positive thing. Having said what I did about families being fragmented and being away from home or are
fh6.151 physically or emotionally unable to cope with the situation for whatever reason, the more stability and life-
fh6.152 sharing, person-sharing by anyone who cares about a child reinforces the positive in his development, I think.
fh6.153 And it may seem insignificant, but I think any of these school programs where the school has attempted to
fh6.154 reach out and make a larger personal contact with the children possible in an organized way.
fh6.155 *And, you know, the frustration with that is that as a system, the school doesn't seem to look to do that. They look*
fh6.156 *to things that are materialistic, they look to technology, and some of us have been trying to say the bottom line*
fh6.157 *is the relationship. But it is so hard to make that statement to the people who are controlling the money. . .*
fh6.158 I'm not against computers. But this is an example where providing technology, a variety of textbooks, or
fh6.159 whatever, and those are all important and significant, but ultimately the way individual lives are changed is
fh6.160 usually through individuals. Parents, siblings, the wider family relationships, the communities, your leaders
fh6.161 in Scout programs and 4-H and church, and all the contributing people in a church, and then in the schools.
fh6.162 You think back to your own experiences, you think of the highlights of your own school experience, there's
fh6.163 always a PERSON involved.

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resources, and the equitable implementation of federal, state, or locally funded programs to address the increasing needs.

Survey Results

Survey results indicated that early literacy experiences, music experiences, limitations on watching television, and participation in organized physical activities positively impacted the success of early elementary school children. Parents of at-risk students reported fewer experiences in these areas while parents of non-at-risk students reported more involvement in these activities. The areas of greatest significance are shown on the Parent Survey Early Experience graphs (see Appendix B, Figures 1-10).

It was not the intent of this research to focus on low socioeconomic status. However, disaggregation of survey information indicated that a greater percentage of low socioeconomic students were included in the "at-risk" group than in the "non-at-risk" group. Results for Hubert Elementary first and second grade students are listed below:

Thirty-four percent of Hubert Elementary first and second grade students are identified as low socioeconomic status, as determined by qualifications for free and reduced lunches.

*27% of 1st and 2nd grade students are low socioeconomic status and seen by their teachers as "at-risk"

*7% of 1st and 2nd grade students are low socioeconomic status and seen by their teachers as not "at-risk"

*16% of 1st & 2nd grade students are not low socioeconomic status, but are seen by their teachers as "at-risk"

*50% of 1st and 2nd grade students are not low socioeconomic status and are not seen by their teachers as "at-risk"

In looking at the 34% of Hubert students with low socioeconomic status, 72% of those first and second grade students are seen by their teachers as "at-risk" while only 18% of students with low socioeconomic status are seen by their teachers as "not-at-risk."

Discussion

The results of this study support the need for young children to have one-on-one instruction as well as to develop meaningful relationships with caring adults. Nine interview participants explicitly described the need for at-risk students to have the opportunity to work one-on-one with teachers or other supporting adults in the school environment: "As far as the kids that are having trouble academically, there are lots of different things that we try to do. One of the things is to try to get to those kids a lot more frequently, to do as much one-on-one as we possibly can" [V-int.BK. 39-44].

Positive adult relationships and the need for good role models were mentioned by eight participants as factors often lacking with at-risk students: "And then I also think that a lot of these kids who are at-risk do not have great role models" [KL-int.WJ.26-29].

To address these needs several interventions were implemented.

Intergenerational Reading

Because our data substantiated the need for one-to-one instruction, an intergenerational reading program was implemented in the first grade classes. Review of professional literature and reflective analysis of instructors supports the positive effects of intergenerational learning. Providing support for academics allows the child to be involved in conversation and relationship-building with "grandparents." The stability of senior citizen volunteers, a factor missing in many

children's lives, aids the child in developing stamina and a more positive perspective about the future (Illinois Intergenerational Initiative, 1996). Interview data provided triangulation:

> . . . I think that using volunteers in the classroom, especially like the elderly. I know we have an elderly gal and I think that is so important for kids to have that contact too. Especially in our household when grandparents are several states away, they still need that contact." [V-int.371-376]

Resource persons from a local retirement community and retired persons from the larger community met with students once a week during second semester. Meeting individually or in small groups, students read to "grandparents" and practiced specific reading and spelling skills. The focus of the program was to target the academic and social needs of at-risk students. At-risk students were given more time than non-at-risk students in one-on-one instruction.

Transportation provided from the retirement center was funded by grant money through the school district and a community resource fund.

This program received overwhelming enthusiasm from students, "grandparents," and teachers. Positive attitudes toward reading were observed consistently by instructors in nearly every student. "Grandparents" commented favorably about their involvement with young children and a genuine feeling of "worth." They also recognized the gains children were making and developed meaningful relationships with the students.

Integration of Music

"Sing Me a Story--Read Me a Song" was implemented in response to a review of professional literature. Our experience in the classroom with young children also triangulated the importance of music integration. Music is one of the most unifying forces in the universe. All children respond to rhythm and patterns. Learning styles (Armstrong, 1987) and Multiple Intelligences (Gardner, 1983) suggest that the medium of music is a resource that should be used in as many ways as possible to help meet the needs of all learners.

The integration of music in other subject areas has been identified as an intervention strategy for young children.

> Music enhances students' ability to learn by developing a number of skills and capacities that are not only necessary for reading, writing, and arithmetic, but whose importance extends far beyond the three Rs. Music also enhances students' motivation to learn, by making their school experience more appealing (Shuler, 1991, p. 25).

As music becomes a part of the child's daily school experience, favorite songs become a valuable resource. Songs are readily internalized and are easily recalled as a guide to reading and writing. "Singing skills" helps to engage at-risk students in learning. Music can help establish the emotional tone of the classroom as well as of the entire school population. (Huxman, 1997)

The development and implementation of "Sing Me a Story / Read Me a Song" included a number of intervention strategies designed to (a) develop a sense

of community, (b) strengthen reading skills, and (c) reinforce basic skills. These interventions were supported by grant funds received through our school district that provided classroom CD players and CDs, story/song cards, and resource books. The following activities were developed and implemented:

1. All-School Sing--All Hubert students (K-4) participated in a bi-weekly assembly for group singing. A theme song was selected for the school. Songs were chosen to be integrated with monthly themes.

2. Singing Skills--Primary students practiced phonetic skills, learned math concepts, and reinforced science and social studies themes through related songs.

3. Word Wall--The "Word Wall" was a carpeted area on which Velcro-backed word and sentence cards were arranged. Children had the opportunity to manipulate words of favorite texts on a carpet wall. A number of developmentally appropriate kinesthetic activities were implemented.

4. Song Cards--Students sang and read from story/song cards. The predictable patterned singing text allowed children to be successful in their early reading experiences.

Instrumental Cues

An innovative use of musical instruments was implemented at Hubert Elementary School during the Fall Semester 1997. This plan was created to assist with time-on-task in a first-grade classroom. The various instrument sounds were used to signal appropriate listening responses from students in place of voiced directions. Compared response times showed the effectiveness of this intervention.

A rainstick was used to signal attention for morning lunch count. Traditional teacher direction took as long as 50 seconds. The instrumental cue produced a response of approximately five seconds. Observation clearly indicated reduced time off-task allowing for more instruction to occur. A "magic maraca" and African drum were also used with similar results. (Koontz, 1997)

"A Few Good Men"

Hubert Elementary Parent-Teacher Organization introduced a program titled "A Few Good Men" through which men were enlisted to read to individual classes on a weekly basis. Experience has shown that women read with children more often than men. A first-grade interview participant spoke about his mom being the only resource in his home for homework/reading support. Jeb's comment that "my dad don't like reading" was characteristic of several students whose fathers were either absent from the homes or who were unwilling to be involved in a relationship with their children which could foster learning [fh.jnl.7-17-97]. This reading program was designed to provide opportunities, particularly for male students, to identify with male readers. ". . .I think that a lot of these kids who are at-risk do not have great role models" [KL-int.WJ.27-29]. The response of both male and female students was highly favorable, and the children looked forward to the visits, stories, and hugs from the dads who participated.

Summer Enrichment

During the summer of 1997, two first-grade teachers worked with at-risk students on a limited basis in their own homes, providing materials for students

and resources for parents. This program entitled Summer Enrichment proved to be very effective and allowed us to continue caring relationships with the students.

> One grandmother, who lives with her daughter and the daughter's four children commented, "I didn't know teachers cared. I told my friends about what you were doing and they couldn't believe it. We'll support you!" The next week she said, "I don't know what we'll do when you aren't the boys' teacher anymore. . ." [bk.jnl.6-27-97]

Skills taught throughout the school year were reinforced during the summer. Because parental involvement is a significant factor in successful learning (McLaughlin & Vacha, 1992), it was crucial that we educated parents and solicited their commitment to support their child's learning. This model made communication with the parents a natural part of the interactions.

One former Summer Enrichment student's mother shared with us that first grade and Summer Enrichment had been the most positive of any of her son's educational experiences. She believed it was because of the personal interactions with the instructors [fh.jnl.7-16-97].

Community Links

Community resources were mentioned by many interview participants as a resource for potential interventions. During the interview process, participants referred to Latchkey [N-int.HM.66-73], Recreation Center [N-int.HM.118], Big Brothers/Big Sisters [H-int.SA.58-59] [H-int.SN.195] [Kl-int.WJ.206], Headstart [N-int.WJ.220], County Partnership for Families [H-int.SN.176-177], Mirror, Inc.

(a regional drug prevention center) [Kl-int.WJ.287], high school community aides [V-int.SC.124], and business partnerships as possible resources. As we continue to assess the needs of at-risk students and implement various intervention strategies, these resources will be considered.

Spelling

A spelling program was developed for second grade students based on a list of high-frequency words used in writing (Sitton, 1995). This systematic program was designed to allow students success in spelling as well as in writing projects across the curriculum. The students were more responsible for their spelling. A spelling survey enlisting comments about the program was sent out to give feedback to the classroom teacher. Parents were not required to sign the surveys but responses were very favorable. Typical comments from the surveys included: "Seems low-keyed for kids," "The kids don't worry about the test day," "I've seen a big increase in my child's spelling skills," and "I like the idea of being responsible for the spelling of the words after the test in other writing" (Nottingham, 1997).

Behavior Management

Positive on-task behavior is a prerequisite for successful learning (Armstrong, 1996). An individual student behavior management program was developed and implemented in one second grade classroom. The purpose was to help minimize distractions and increase student time-on-task, thus enhancing students' academic performance. The program was based on daily individual student contracts targeting low-level disruptive behaviors. Two students were targeted for a two-week period.

The classroom teacher met with parents to elicit support and explain procedures. Specific behaviors were tallied to form a baseline. Using the contracts, behaviors decreased from five or more occurrences in a one day period to only one or two daily occurrences (Vierthaler, 1997).

Implications

"The only factor becoming scarce in a world of abundance is human attention" (Kelly, 1998). The intervention strategies that have been explored and implemented all address the students' needs for involvement in meaningful relationships.

A theme we discovered was the "tragedy of wealth." Further study could include identifying risk factors and interventions for those students who are victims of the "tragedy of wealth, not of money, but of opportunity" [H-int.SB.113-114].

Another area of study might address the use of community resources for involvement in educational settings or for financial support for school-initiated programs. Our students belong to everyone in the community. It does take a community dedicated to the goal of helping all children achieve their potential.

> Education must be rooted in the ethic of caring--caring about instruction, learning, curriculum and, most importantly, the whole student. Caring connects the affective and cognitive. This ethic embodies compassion, cohesion and commitment. Educators who believe they can make a difference do make a difference. The ethic of caring provides the vehicle to make it happen. (Shultz, 1996, p. 51)

Making a difference is what education is all about. Our greatest natural resource, our children, depend on it. We as educators are challenged to help ALL children build connections--in learning, in relationships, and most importantly, within themselves.

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Appendix A

Table 1 Data Sources

Table 1
Data Sources

Data Source	Type	Duration	Analysis
Certified Staff (13)	Interview	Two times, Spring 1997 & Fall 1998	*Member checking *Constant comparative
Classified Staff (6)	Interview	One time, Spring 1997	*Member checking *Constant comparative
Parents (6)	Interview	One time, Summer 1997	*Member checking *Constant comparative
Students (5)	Interview	One time, Summer 1997	*Member checking *Constant comparative
Parent Survey	Early Literacy Experiences Survey	One time, Fall 1997	*Type categorization
Community member (1)	Interview	One time, Summer 1997	*Member checking *Constant comparative

Appendix B

Figures

Figure Caption

Figure B1. Percentage of how often parents read to child based on analysis of responses to parent survey.

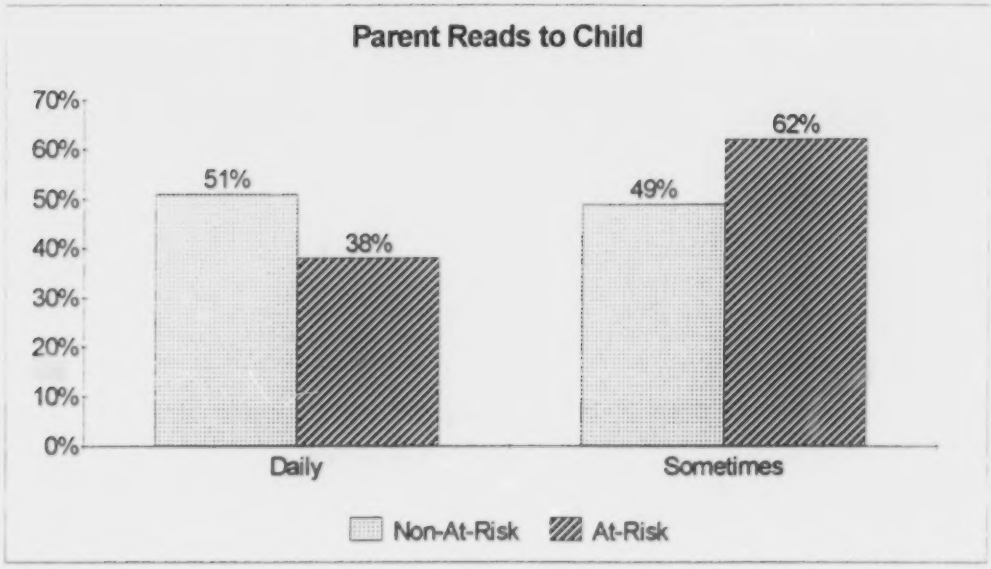

Parent Reads to Child
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
51%
38%
49%
62%
Daily
Sometimes
Non-At-Risk
At-Risk

Figure Caption

Figure B2. Percentage of how often child read to self based on analysis of responses to parent survey.

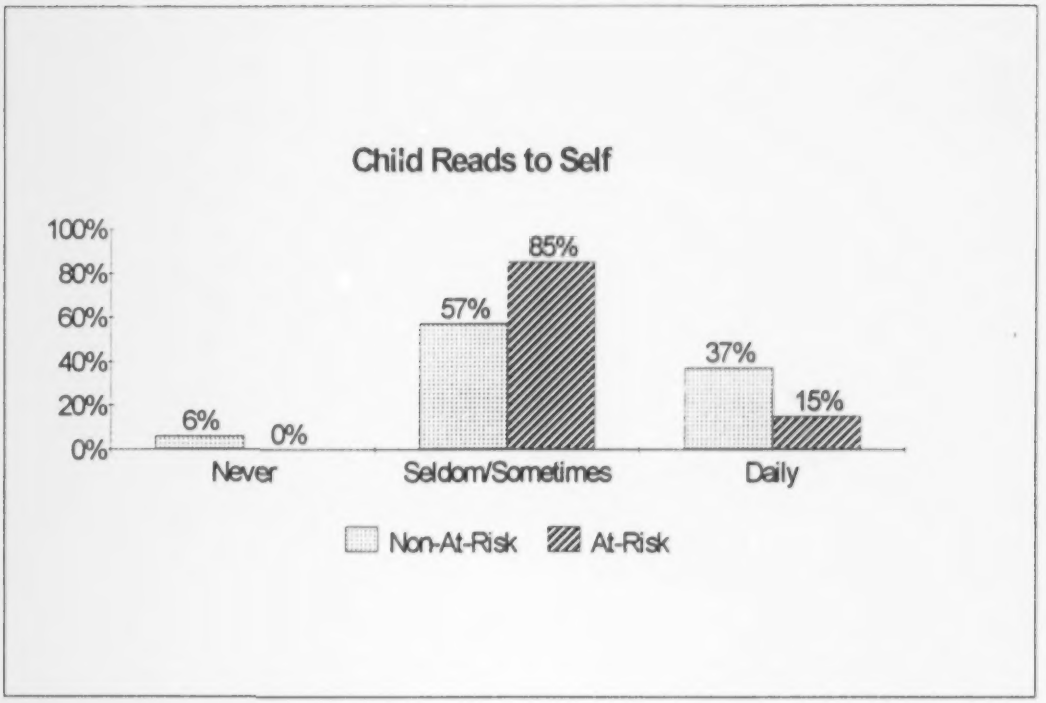

Child Reads to Self
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
6%
0%
57%
85%
37%
15%
Never
Seldom/Sometimes
Daily
Non-At-Risk
At-Risk

Figure Caption

Figure B3. Percentage of how often parent sang with child as a preschooler based on analysis of responses to parent survey.

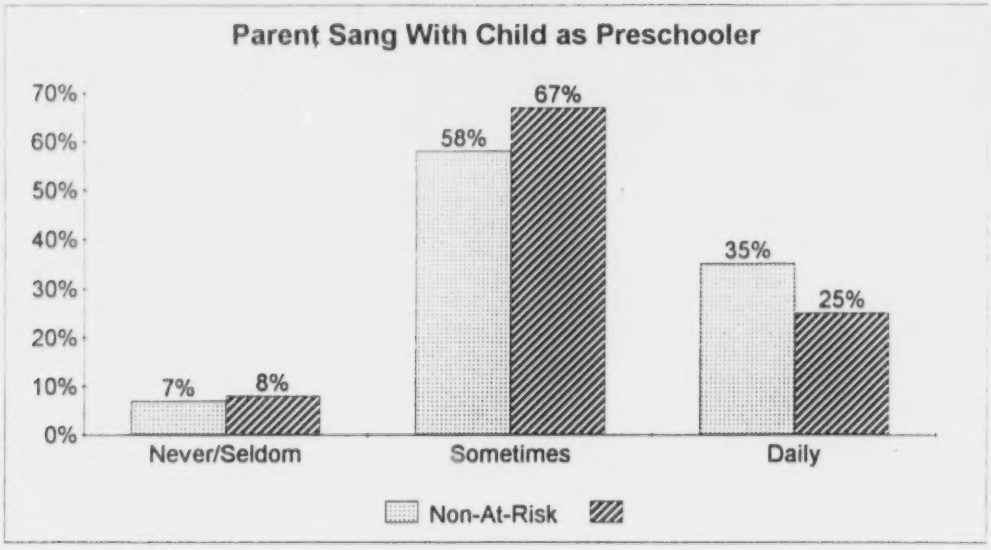

Parent Sang With Child as Preschooler
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
7%
8%
58%
67%
35%
25%
Never/Seldom
Sometimes
Daily
Non-At-Risk

Figure Caption

Figure B4. Percentage of child's participation in organized musical activities based on analysis of responses to parents survey.

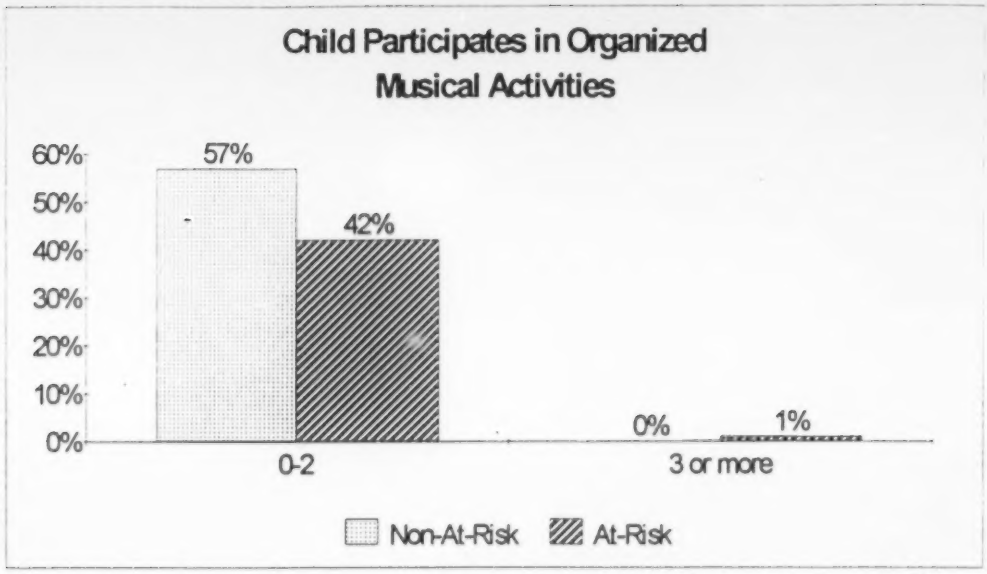

Child Participates in Organized Musical Activities
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
57%
42%
0%
1%
0-2
3 or more
Non-At-Risk
At-Risk

Figure Caption

Figure B5. Percentage of nursery rhymes recited by child based on analysis of responses to parent survey.

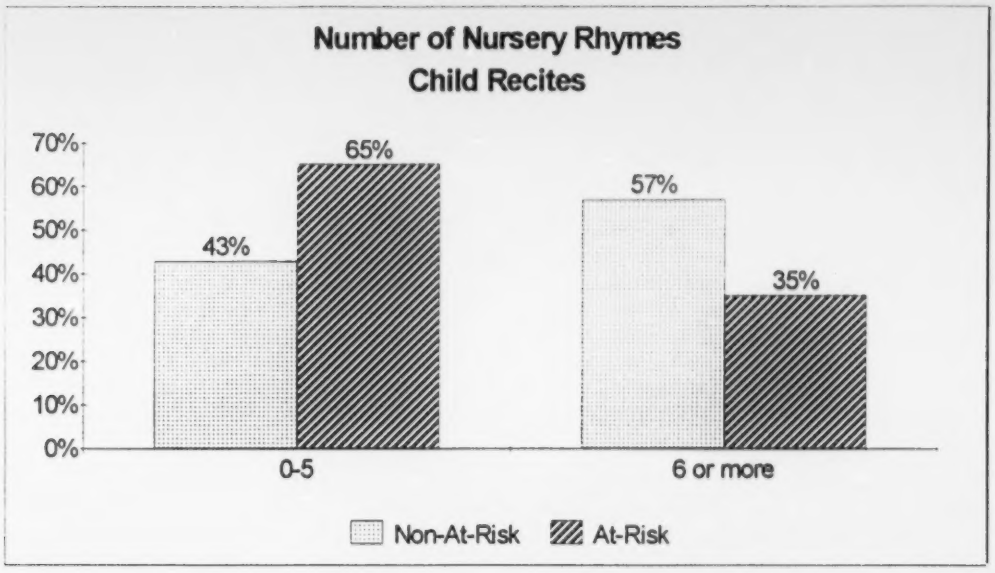

Number of Nursery Rhymes
Child Recites
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
43%
65%
57%
35%
0-5
6 or more
Non-At-Risk
At-Risk

Figure Caption

Figure B6. Percentage of songs child sang based on analysis of responses to parent survey.

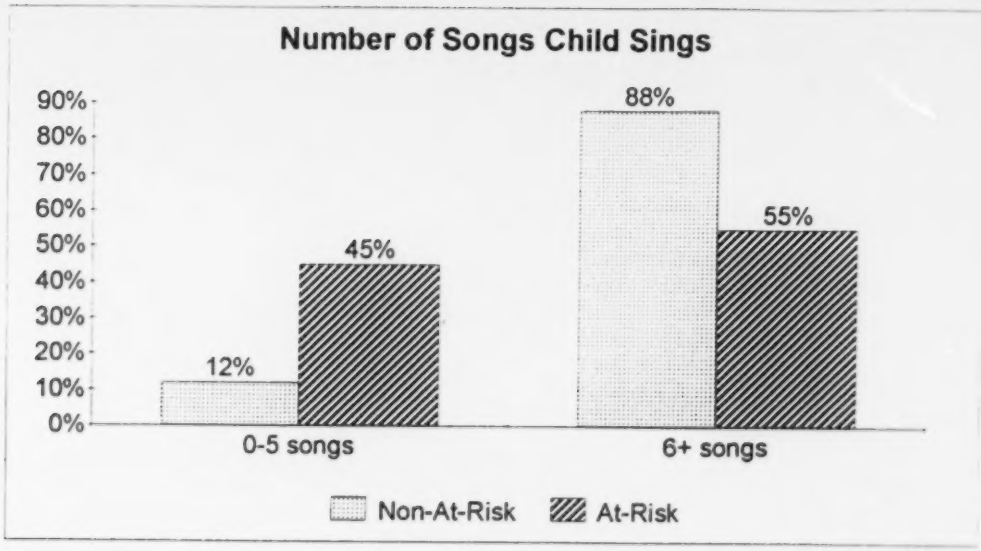

Number of Songs Child Sings
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
12%
45%
88%
55%
0-5 songs
6+ songs
Non-At-Risk
At-Risk

Figure Caption

Figure B7. Percentage of child's participation in organized physical activities based on analysis of responses to parent survey.

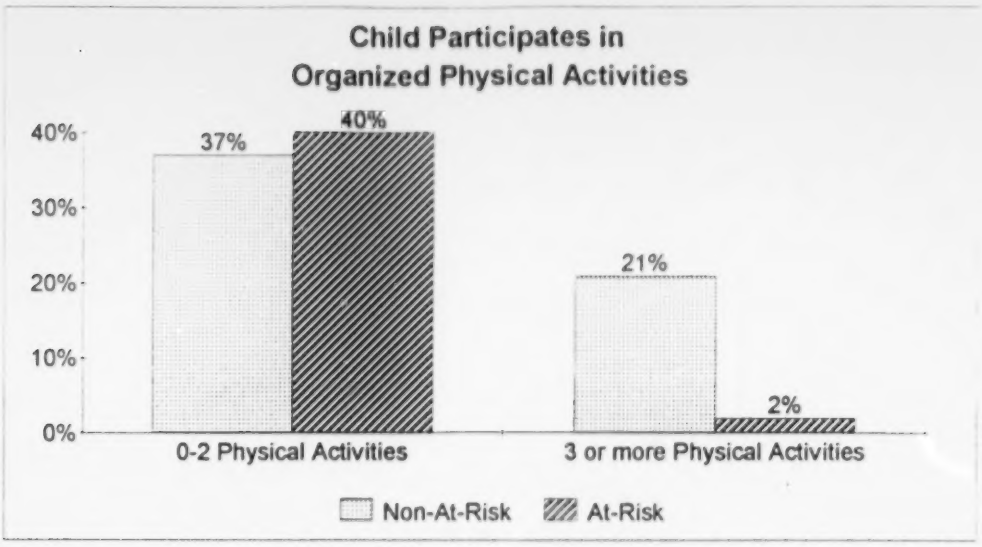

Child Participates in
Organized Physical Activities
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
37%
40%
21%
2%
0-2 Physical Activities
3 or more Physical Activities
Non-At-Risk
At-Risk

Figure Caption

Figure B8. Percentage of hours child watched television based on analysis of responses to parent survey.

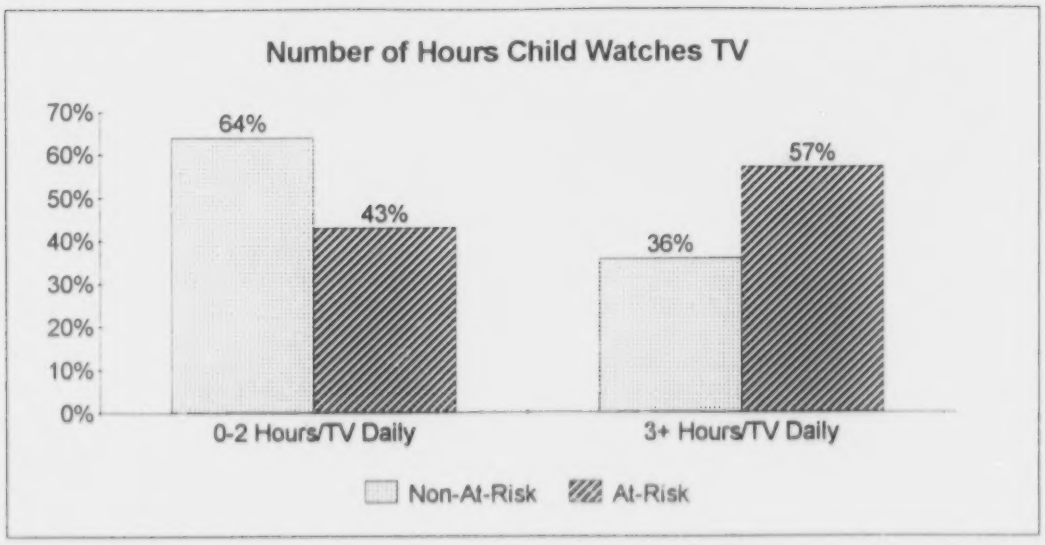

Number of Hours Child Watches TV
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
64%
43%
36%
57%
0-2 Hours/TV Daily
3+ Hours/TV Daily
Non-At-Risk
At-Risk

Figure Caption

Figure B9. Percentage of children who had access to computers based on analysis of responses to parent survey.

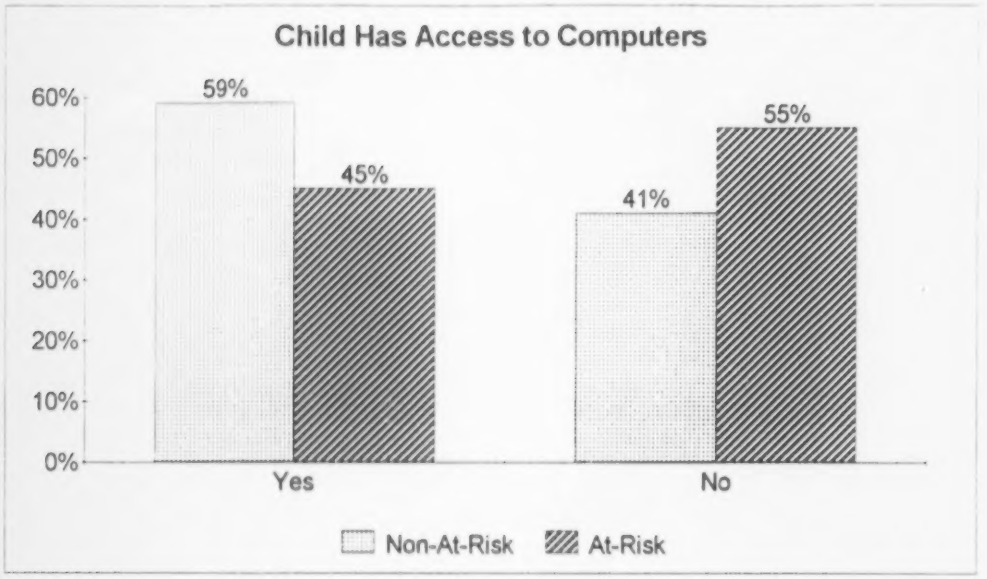
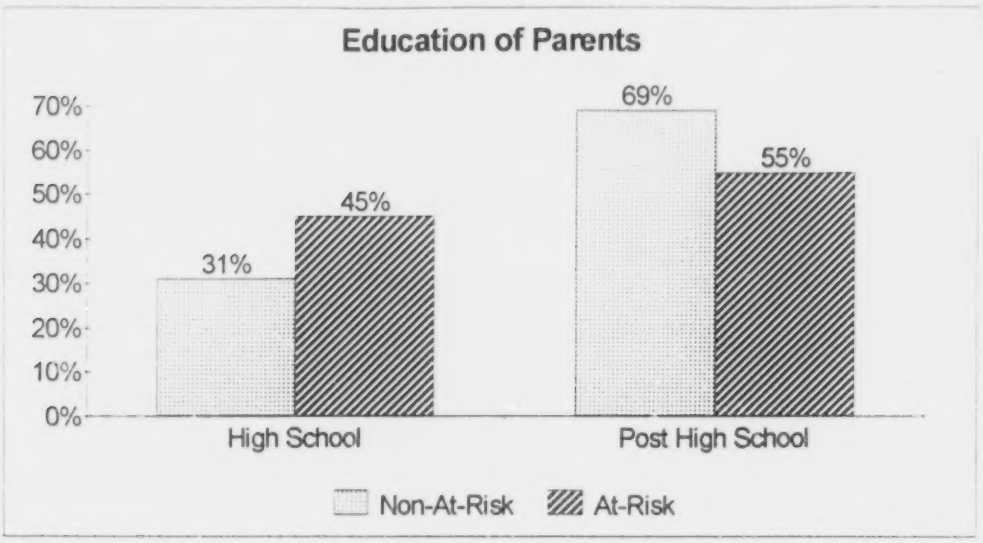

Child Has Access to Computers
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
59%
45%
41%
55%
Yes
No
Non-At-Risk
At-Risk

Figure Caption

Figure B10. Percentage indicating educational level of parents based on analysis of responses to parent survey.


Education of Parents
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
31%
45%
69%
55%
High School
Post High School
Non-At-Risk
At-Risk

Appendix C

Institutional Review Board Documentation

WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY
Department of Curriculum and Instruction

THE WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR PROJECT/PROPOSAL APPROVAL
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

Name of Principal Investigator:	Dr. Tonya Huber
Department/Program Affiliation:	Hesston Site-Based Master's
Campus Address:	Sunset Elementary School 619 Boyd, Newton, KS 67114 316-284-6570
Name of Co-Investigators:	Frankie Huxman Eydie Klassen Barbara Koontz Cheryl Nottingham Charlene Vierthaler
Co-Investigator is:	X Graduate Student
Type of Project:	X Class Project

If student project, address of students: Same as above

Title of Project/Proposal:	Early Interventions for the At-Risk Student
Expected Completion Date:	April, 1998

Wichita State University, 1845 Fairmount, Wichita, Kansas 67260-0028 Telephone: (316) 689-3322 Fax: (316) 689-3302

1. A brief description of the research in non-technical language:

As teachers of young elementary age students, we are finding increasing numbers of children who are academically unsuccessful/below grade level. Our focus is early intervention with these academically and/or socially at-risk students. We will interview all staff members (approximately 24) at Sunset School, which will help us to identify these students and the factors which contribute to their lack of success in the classroom. Identifying workable strategies for intervention in the primary grades is the ultimate goal of this research.

2. A description of the benefits of the research to the human subjects, if any, and of the benefits to human or scientific knowledge:

Through our research, we hope to gain information which will have an impact on the programs available to academically unsuccessful K-2 students in USD#373.

3. A description of the subjects, how the subjects are to be selected, how many are to be used, and indicate explicitly whether any are minors (under age 18 per Kansas law) or otherwise members of "vulnerable" populations, e.g. prisoners, elderly, handicapped, etc.:

We will interview approximately 24 participants that are faculty and staff of USD#373 at Sunset School. The interviewees all have direct interaction with students in academic settings. None of these participants are minors or are members of a "vulnerable" population.

4. A description of how the subjects will be used:

Each participant will be interviewed individually by one of the project team members. Recursive interviews will be conducted with each participant. Information obtained will be instrumental in determining "risk factors" and interventions for at-risk and/or academically unsuccessful students.

5. A description of the risks and discomforts, if any, to the subjects. Risks or discomforts may be physical, psychological, or social. Some research involves neither risks nor discomforts but rather violations of normal expectations of daily life. Such violations, if any, should be specified:

No risks or discomforts for our participants are expected.

6. A description of the means to be taken to minimize each risk or violation, including the means by which the subject's personal privacy is to be protected and confidentiality of information received maintained (e.g. disposition of questionnaires, interview notes, recorded audio or videotapes, etc.):

All information and notes obtained through interviews and/or observations will be kept in a locked area. Participant identities will be coded and will not be disclosed in any publication of information without informed consent.

7. If a waiver of written informed consent is desired, a justification of that request:

Not applicable.

8. A copy of any consent form that is to be used with the subjects, including a line for signature and date, must be attached. The consent form is to be placed on WSU departmental letterhead. Consent forms must be retained for three years.

See attached "Informed Consent."

9. Any other information pertaining to the researcher's ethical responsibilities to the subjects:

Not at this time.

10. Any questionnaire or survey forms used for actual administration or as guides for interviews must be attached. The Principal Investigator agrees to abide by the federal regulations for the protection of human subjects and to maintain raw data (including audiotapes and videotapes) and consent forms for a minimum of three (3) years beyond the completion of the study. If the data collection or testing of subjects is to be performed by student assistants, the Principal Investigator will assume full responsibility for supervising the students to ensure that human subjects are adequately protected.

See attached interview guide.

Tonya Huber	4/17/97
Signature of Principal Investigator	Date
Frankie Huxman	4-22-97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date
Barbara Koontz	4-22-97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date
Lydia Klassen	4-22-97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date
Cheryl Nottingham	4-22-97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date
Charlene Vierthaler	4-22-97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date

Observation/Interview Face Sheet*

Observer_____

Participant _____

Key Descriptors (major issues, patterns, themes):

Day & Date _____

Location/Setting _____

Beginning & Ending Observation/Interview Time _____ to _____

Tape Identification Number _____

Topical Descriptors (general issues, patterns, themes, and/or questions):

Reflection (final 5-10 minutes of observation/interview; subjective response including your own disposition or mental state during the observation/interview):

Interviewer/Observer _____ _____
(signature) (date)

*The face sheet should be completed at the time of the observation/interview.

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WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Informed Consent
"Early Interventions for the At-Risk Student"
Research Project

You are invited to participate in a study of "Early Interventions for the At-Risk Student". We hope to gain information concerning the characteristics of the unsuccessful learner(academically, socially, emotionally) as well as identifying workable strategies for intervention in the primary grades. You are selected as a possible participant in this study because of your involvement with young children at Sunset School.

If you choose to participate, you will participate in at least two audiotaped interviews of about 30 minutes for the purpose of collecting data relative to the study.

No risks or inconveniences are anticipated. You may meet with a team member at a time that is mutually convenient. Benefits will include a sharing of knowledge which will potentially make an impact on the programs available to our K-2 students in the district. Because you have a vested interest in education, information will be shared with you throughout this project.

Any information obtained in the study in which you can be identified will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relations with USD #373 or with Wichita State University. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without affecting your status as an employee of USD #373 or your association with Wichita State University.

If you have any questions about this research, please ask a team member. If you have additional questions during the study, we will be glad to answer them. You can contact the research team at Sunset School, 619 Boyd, Newton, KS 67114, 316-284-6570; or Dr. Tonya Huber at Wichita State University, 1845 Fairmount, Wichita, KS 67260-0028, 316-978-3322.

Wichita State University, 1845 Fairmount, Wichita, Kansas 67260-0028 Telephone: (316) 689-3322 Fax: (316) 689-3302

You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

You are making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that you have read the information provided above and have voluntarily decided to participate.

Sincerely,

Tonya Huber	4/17/97
Signature of Principal Investigator	Date
Signature of Participant	Date
Cheryl Nottingham	4-17-97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date
Lydia Klassen	4-17-97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date
Barbara Koontz	4-17-97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date
Charlene Vierthaler	4-17-97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date
Frances A. Hussar	4-17-97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date

Early Interventions for the At-Risk Student

Research Project

Interview Questions:

1. Describe characteristics or behaviors of the academically unsuccessful or at-risk student.

2. Are there at-risk or academically unsuccessful students that you encounter at Sunset School who have special needs that you feel are not dealt with? Explain.

3. What are some ways the needs of academically or socially at-risk students are being met?

4. What strategies are you using to meet the needs of the at-risk students you encounter?

5. Are you aware of programs available to other teachers (outside of Sunset) that are used to address the needs of the academically or socially at-risk students? What are they?

6. Are there programs for the at-risk student that you feel should be offered at Sunset? What are they?

Additional Comments:

WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of Research Administration

March 13, 1997

TO: Dr. Tonya Huber, Frankie Huxman, Eydie Klassen, Barbara Koontz, Cheryl Nottingham, Charlene Vierthaler

The University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your statement concerning the research proposal entitled:

Early Interventions for the At-Risk Student

The IRB has found that, as described, it complies with all the requirements established by the University in accordance with the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects.

- ☒ The human subjects will not be at risk.
- ☐ The human subjects will be at risk but the importance of the objective outweighs the inherent risk to the subject.
- ☐ A waiver of written informed consent has been approved.

The following three procedures are required for continued supervision of this research project:

1. Any significant change in the experimental procedure as described should be reviewed by the IRB prior to altering the project.
2. If your project continues for longer than 12 months you will receive a renewal application form to complete; all on-going projects are subject to annual review by the IRB.
3. At the completion of your research you are expected to submit a final report; the form is attached.

Thank you for your help and cooperation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (ext. 3060).

Sincerely,

Kenneth H. Pitetti
Chairperson, IRB

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Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas 67260-0007 Telephone (316) 978-3285 Fax (316) 978-3750

April 16, 1997

To: Dr. Fred Saab

From: Frankie Huxman, Barb Koontz, Cheryl Nottingham, Charlene Vierthaler, Eydie Klassen

RE: WSU Site-Based Masters Program

We are participating in WSU's Site-Based Masters of Education in Curriculum and Instruction program working on a research project. Our research will focus on "Early Interventions for the At-Risk Students". We have prepared for WSU an application for our research proposal for the University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and an Informed Consent for our participants. These documents have both been approved by the review board at WSU. Please take a moment to read over the attached documents and sign below if you approve so we can proceed with our research.

Thank You,

Barbara Koontz.
Eydie Klassen
Cheryl Nottingham
Frankie Huxman
Charlene Vierthaler

Fred Saab
Signature of Assistant Superintendent

4-17-97
Date

MEMO

To: Wichita State University Institutional Review Board

From: Hesston Site-Based Master's Research Team (At-Risk)
Tonya Huber, Principal Investigator
Frankie Huxman, Co-Investigator
Eydie Klassen, Co-Investigator
Barbara Koontz, Co-Investigator
Cheryl Nottingham, Co-Investigator
Charlene Vierthaler, Co-Investigator

Date: 6-6-97

Re: Addendum to Research Proposal

On March 13, 1997 you approved our proposal entitled "Early Interventions for the At-Risk Student." After completing interviews with the initial participant group, we have determined that our study would be more complete if we included interviews with parents/guardians and students. These groups would include not more than 10 students and 10 parents. Therefore, we would like to amend our proposal with the attached additional consent forms and interview questions.

We would appreciate your prompt attention to this request so that our research can proceed in a timely manner.

Thank you for your help and cooperation. Please feel free to contact one of us with any questions you might have.

WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Informed Consent
"Early Interventions for the At-Risk Student"
Research Project

You are invited to participate in a study of "Early Interventions for the At-Risk Student". We hope to gain information concerning the characteristics of the unsuccessful learner(academically, socially, emotionally) as well as identifying workable strategies for intervention in the primary grades. You and/or your child are selected as a possible participant in this study because of your child's attendance at Sunset School.

If you choose to participate, you will participate in at least one audio-taped interview of about 30 minutes for the purpose of collecting data relative to the study.

No risks or inconveniences are anticipated. You may meet with a team member at a time that is mutually convenient. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw from this study at any time. Any information obtained in the study in which you can be identified will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission.

If you have any questions about this research, please ask a team member. If you have additional questions during the study, we will be glad to answer them. You can contact the research team at Sunset School, 619 Boyd, Newton, KS 67114, 316-284-6570; or Dr. Tonya Huber at Wichita State University, 1845 Fairmount, Wichita, KS 67260-0028, 316-978-3322.

You are making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that you have read the information provided above and have voluntarily decided to participate. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

Wichita State University, 1845 Fairmount, Wichita, Kansas 67260-0028 Telephone (316) 689-3322 Fax (316) 689-3302

Tonya Huber	6/24/97
Signature of Principal Investigator	Date
Signature of Participant	Date
Eydie Klassen	6/24/97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date
Barbara Kent	6/24/97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date
Cheryl Nottingham	6-24-97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date
Charlene Vierthaler	6/24/97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date
Frances Thurman	6/26/97
Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	Date

Early Interventions for the At-Risk Student
Research Project

Interview Questions for Students:

1. Tell me about a school day that stands out for you.

2. What do you do well at school?

3. Do you have trouble with anything at school?
   If so, tell me why you have trouble with this.

4. Tell me about what you do before school.
   Tell me about what you do after school.

5. Is there anything else you would like to share.

Additional Comments:

Early Interventions for the At-Risk Student
Research Project

Interview Questions for Parents/Guardians:

1. How do you perceive your child's school experience?

2. Does the school address the needs of your child?
   Can you talk a little more about that?

3. Tell me about your time before school in the mornings.
   Tell me about your time after school in the evenings.

4. Is there anything else you would like to share.

Additional Comments:

WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of Research Administration

June 18, 1997

TO: Dr. Tonya Huber, Frankie Huxman, Eydie Klassen, Barbara Koontz, Cheryl Nottingham, Charlene Vierthaler - Curriculum & Instruction

The University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your statement concerning the research proposal entitled:

Early Interventions for the At-Risk Student (Addendum)

The IRB has found that, as described, it complies with all the requirements established by the University in accordance with the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects.

- ☒ The human subjects will not be at risk.
- ☐ The human subjects will be at risk but the importance of the objective outweighs the inherent risk to the subject.
- ☐ A waiver of written informed consent has been approved.

The following three procedures are required for continued supervision of this research project:

1. Any significant change in the experimental procedure as described should be reviewed by the IRB prior to altering the project.
2. If your project continues for longer than 12 months you will receive a renewal application form to complete; all on-going projects are subject to annual review by the IRB.
3. At the completion of your research you are expected to submit a final report; the form is attached.

Thank you for your help and cooperation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (ext. 5635).

Sincerely,

Kenneth H. Pitetti
Chairperson, IRB

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Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas 67260-0007 Telephone: (316) 978-3285 Fax: (316) 978-3750

WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of Research Administration

July 8, 1997

TO: Dr. Tonya Huber, Frankie Huxman, Eydie Klassen, Barbara Koontz, Cheryl Nottingham, Charlene Vierthaler - C&I

The University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your statement concerning the research proposal entitled:

Early Interventions for the At-Risk Student (amendment)

The IRB has found that, as described, it complies with all the requirements established by the University in accordance with the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects.

- ☒ The human subjects will not be at risk.
- ☐ The human subjects will be at risk but the importance of the objective outweighs the inherent risk to the subject.
- ☐ A waiver of written informed consent has been approved.

The following three procedures are required for continued supervision of this research project:

1. Any significant change in the experimental procedure as described should be reviewed by the IRB prior to altering the project.
2. If your project continues for longer than 12 months you will receive a renewal application form to complete; all on-going projects are subject to annual review by the IRB.
3. At the completion of your research you are expected to submit a final report; the form is attached.

Thank you for your help and cooperation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (ext. 5635).

Sincerely,

Kenneth H. Pitetti
Chairperson, IRB

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Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas 67260-0007 Telephone: (316) 978-3285 Fax: (316) 978-3750

WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT RELEASE WAIVER FOR VIDEOTAPING/PHOTOGRAPHING

Activity: Research Project: "Early Interventions for the At-Risk Student"

THE UNDERSIGNED, BEING THE PARENT/GUARDIAN OF THE STUDENT, BY SIGNING THIS RELEASE AGREES TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. The student named below may be videotaped or photographed by the co-investigators of this project and I fully consent to this activity. The participation is voluntary and is not required.
2. The videotape or photographs will be used only for educational purposes.
3. The student's name will not be used.

Please Print STUDENT'S NAME

Tonya Huber Signature of Principal Investigator	6/24/97 Date
Signature of Participant	Date
Eydie Klassen Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	6/24/97 Date
Barbara Hoyt Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	6/24/97 Date
Cheryl Nottingham Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	6:24:97 Date
Charlene Wirthaler Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	6/24/97 Date
Frances Thurman Signature of Co-Investigator, Research Team	6/26/97 Date

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NEWTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT 373
NEWTON, KANSAS
DO NOT DESTROY UNTIL THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR
PERMISSION BLANK FOR FIELD TRIPS
AND CONSENT TO RELEASE OF SCHOOL RECORDS

THIS FORM IS TO BE KEPT IN THE STUDENT'S FILE
THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL YEAR

In connection with the educational program of Unified School District 373 we are asking for your written consent to take your child on trips during the school year. This authorization will eliminate the need for special permission before each excursion. Parents will be informed of each trip. If you do not wish your child to participate, you as a parent must send written notification to the teacher before the trip.

Generally, these trips are made during pleasant weather when children can walk. Occasionally, the trip requires transportation and on these occasions circumstances may warrant a school bus or the use of private cars driven by parents.

For any trip that requires a financial obligation the teacher will plan far enough in advance for children and parents to take care of budgeting.

We are also asking for your written consent to allow video tape taken on the District's school busses and at other locations that may include your child to be viewed by other children, parents and appropriate officials as deemed necessary in the administration of the school system and its disciplinary procedures. You may view and copy any tapes kept by the District containing your child upon written request to the Superintendent and upon payment of the applicable cost to copy the tape requested.

Name of Child _____
Last First Middle

I give permission for my child to go on school trips and to the release of the above records during this school year.

I understand that reasonable precaution will be taken to safeguard my child during the trip and I will not hold the Newton Board of Education or any of its employees responsible for any accidents or loss which might be sustained. The students will be under supervision during the trip.

_____
Signature of Parent or Guardian

_____
Date Signed

REVISED: JULY 7, 1994

Appendix D

Hubert Elementary School Parent Survey

HUBERT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PARENT SURVEY

Please complete a copy of this form for each child enrolled at Hubert.

Child's name_____ Age____ Grade____ Sex____
Siblings not enrolled at Hubert and ages:

New to Hubert____ Previously enrolled at Hubert____

1. **How often do you read to your child?**
   never seldom sometimes daily

2. **Does your child read by him/herself? (includes picture reading for young children)**
   never seldom sometimes daily

3. **Did your child read this summer?**
   never seldom sometimes daily

4. **Did you read to your child this summer?**
   never seldom sometimes daily

5. **Did you sing to your child during infancy?**
   never seldom sometimes daily

6. **Did you sing with your child as a pre-schooler?**
   never seldom sometimes daily

7. **What musical experiences does your child have now?**
singing____ dance lessons____ choir____ tapes/CDs____
instrumental lessons____ other (please specify)_____

8. **How many nursery rhymes can your child recite?**
   0 1-5 6-10 more than 10

9. **How many songs can your child sing?**
   0 1-5 6-10 more than 10

(Please turn this page over to complete form)

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10. Does your child engage in outdoor play? (running, biking, jumping rope, active free play, etc.)

never seldom sometimes daily

11. Does your child engage in fine motor activities? (coloring, legos, puzzles, drawing, play-dough, etc.)

never seldom sometimes daily

12. What organized physical activities does your child engage in now?

soccer____ baseball____ basketball____ martial arts____
swimming____ other (please specify)_____

13. How many hours a day does your child watch TV?

0 1-2 3-5 more than 5

14. How many hours a day does your child play video games?

0 1-2 3-5 more than 5

15. Does your child have access to learning activities on a computer outside of school?

yes no

16. What is your level of education–parent/guardian?

8th grade high school college

Optional:
Name_____
Address_____
Phone_____

Appendix E

Annotated Bibliography

Annotated Bibliography

Allington, R. L., Gaskins, R. W., Broikou, K. & Jachym, N., (1990). Improving school literacy programs for at-risk learners through instructional coordination. Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 1(2), 123-136. Abstract from: SilverPlatter 3.11: PsycLIT Item: 79-40904

This article supports a consistent curricular plan; instructional collaboration between classroom and support teachers; insured adequacy of instruction, and existence of shared knowledge.

Farner, C. D. Mending the broken circle. [Online] Available http://www.central.edu/education/REX/atrisk.htm/, August, 1996.

Seven steps are listed for giving hope to the K-12 at-risk children.

Ferguson, P. & Streib, M. M. (1996). Longitudinal outcome effects of non-at-risk and at-risk transition first-grade samples: A follow-up study and further analysis. Psychology in the Schools, 33 (1), 38-45. Abstract from: SilverPlatter 3.11: PsycLIT Item: 83-28596

At-risk students given an extra year's placement did not change their at-risk status nor did they improve their achievement.

Fuchs, L. S., Fuchs, D. & Bishop, N. (1992). Instructional adaptation for students at risk. Journal of Educational Research, 86 (2), 70-84. Abstract from: SilverPlatter 3.11: PsycLIT Item: 80-35438

Research includes 110 elementary and middle school teachers of reading and math who had at least one student with a learning disability. The study indicates measures of school achievement obtained for learning disabled, low-achieving non-handicapped, and average-achieving students. Teachers also reported characteristics of themselves, their students, and their schools.

Greenberg, K. H., Coleman, L. & Rankin, W. W. (1993). The cognitive enrichment network program: Goodness of fit with at-risk gifted students. Roeper Review, 16 (2), 91-95. Abstract from: SilverPlatter 3.11: PsycLIT Item: 81-23440

The Cognitive Enrichment Network Educational Model (COGNET) describes a comprehensive elementary school approach to aid children in becoming effective, independent, and lifelong learners. This program also describes how to nurture the gifts and talents of the at-risk child.

Gregory, L. W. (1995). The "turnaround" process: Factors influencing the school success of urban youth. Special Issue: Creating supportive communities for adolescent development: Challenges to scholars. Journal of Adolescent Research, 10 (1) 136-154. Abstract from: SilverPlatter 3.11: PsycLIT Item: 82-35008

Inner city high school students were interviewed about their elementary through high school experiences, their reasons for failure, and their motivations and supports for change. Findings suggest that schools need to provide more human guidance and positive reinforcement.

Hixson. At-risk. [Online] Available

http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students/atrisk/at500.htm,

1993.

America has struggled for the last 50 years to successfully meet the challenge of educating all students. "Students are not 'at-risk' but are placed at-risk by adults." Educators must focus on institutional and professional capacity and responsiveness.

Kagan, D. M. (1990). How schools alienate students at risk: A model for examining proximal classroom variables. Educational Psychologist, 25 (2), 105-125. Abstract from: SilverPlatter 3.11: PsycLIT Item: 78-11144

Three recent ethnographic student-at-risk studies are analyzed. The assumption is made that schools (not students) are the main cause of the at-risk status.

McLaughlin, T. F. & Vacha, E.F. (1992). The at-risk student: A proposal for action. Journal of Instructional Psychology, 19 (1), 66-68. Abstract from: SilverPlatter 3.11: PsycLIT Item: 79-33027

Characteristics of the at-risk students are described and a model plan on how to work with academic and social deficits is included.

McLeskey, J. & others (1995). Learning disabilities and grade retention: A review of issues with recommendations for practice. Incomplete source. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. EJ 505 133)

This article reviews literature addressing students with learning disabilities and the effectiveness of grade retention.

McNamara, K. M. (1996). Bonding to school and the development of responsibility. Incomplete source. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. EJ 526 388)

This program bonds high-risk students to the school for developing positive behavior, social responsibility, and service. This bonding builds their social and academic skills.

Poidevant, J. M. & Spruill, D. A. (1993). Play activities of at-risk and non-at-risk elementary students: Is there a difference? Child Study Journal, 23 (3), 173-186. Abstract from: SilverPlatter 3.11: PsychLIT Item: 81-23330

A comparison of at-risk and non-at-risk students in kindergarten through grade 3 is examined. Results showed significant differences in three areas: Make-believe with objects, make-believe with action / situations, and verbal communication.

Southwest Education Development Laboratory. Evolution of the concept "at-risk". [Online] Available http://diogenes.sedl.org/rural/atrisk/concept.html, March 5, 1997.

This article discusses in detail the meaning of the term "at-risk," where the term originated and characteristics of the at-risk student.

Rush, S. & Vitale, P. A. (1994). Analysis for determining factors that place elementary students at risk. Journal of Educational Research 87 (6), 325-333. Abstract from: SilverPlatter 3.11: PsycLIT Item: 82-03515

The article acknowledges eight significant at-risk factors that can help identify potential dropouts as early as elementary school age. Two of the main factors are academically at-risk and behavior and coping skills.

Russell, J., Grandgenett, N. & Lickteig, M. (1994). Serving the needs of at-risk students: The relationship to school personnel attitudes and efforts. Journal of Research and Development in Education, 27. Abstract from: SilverPlatter 3.11: PsychLIT Item: 82-15127

In this article, relationships are examined between attitudes held by school personnel, degree of risk exhibited by students, and efforts to help at-risk students. Five factors used were desired effect, influence over students in-school behavior, characteristics of out-of-school behavior, and influence over out-of-school behavior and responsibility for out-of-school problems.

Strother, D. & Burnett, E. (1991). Learning to fail: Case studies of students at risk. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 357 104)

This study determined what students are at risk, what puts them at risk, what schools are doing to help, and how effective these efforts are. It offers data on how children can be helped to become productive members of their community.

Vickers, H. S. (1994). Young children at risk: Differences in family functioning. Journal of Educational Research; 87 (5), 262-270. Abstract from: SilverPlatter 3.11: PsycLIT Item: 82-03562

This article looks at two hypotheses and reveals data that supports that families of at-risk students are different from families of non-at-risk students both demographically and in interaction patterns.

Voices of Illinois Children, Chicago. (1995). Illinois kids count 1995: Building the future. Incomplete source. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 392 528)

Eight strategies are described in this report to improve the lives of Illinois children and families. Spending more time with children and joining tutor or mentor programs are two ways to help meet the needs of these children.